The Friendly Defiance.

BY CHARLES MACKAY.

Thou shalt not rob me, thievish Time,
Of all my blessings, all my joy;
I have some jewels in my heart
Which thou art powerless to destroy.

Thou may'st denude my arm of strength,
And leave my temples seam'd and bare;
Deprive mine eyes of passion's light,
And scatter silver o'er my hair;

But never, while a book remains,
And breathes a woman or a child,
Shalt thou deprive me, whilst I live,
Of feelings fresh and undefiled.

No, never, while the earth is fair,
And reason keeps its dial bright,
Whate'er thy robberies, eh, Time,
Shall I be bankrupt of delight.

Whate'er thy victories on my frame,
Thou canst not cheat me of this truth—
That though the limbs may faint and fail
The spirit can renew its youth.

So, thievish Time, I fear thee not—
Thou'rt powerless on this heart of mine;
My jewels shall belong to me,
'Tis but the settings that art thine.

Pictures of Manners in England in the Times of James II.

BY T. B. MACAULAY.

The Country Clergy.

The clergy were regarded as, on the whole, a plebeian class. And, indeed, for one who made the figure of a gentleman, ten were mere menial servants. A large proportion of those divines who had no benefices, or whose benefices were too small to afford a comfortable revenue, lived in the houses of laymen. It had long been evident that this practice tended to degrade the priestly character. Laud had exerted himself to effect a change; and Charles the First had repeatedly issued positive orders that none but men of high rank should presume to keep domestic chaplains. But these injunctions had become obsolete. Indeed, during the domination of the Puritans, many of the ejected ministers of the Church of England could obtain bread and shelter only by attaching themselves to the households of royalist gentlemen; and the habits which had been formed in those times of trouble continued long after the re-establishment of monarchy and episcopacy. In the mansions of men of liberal sentiments and cultivated understandings, the chaplain was doubtless treated with urbanity and kindness. His conversation, his literary assistance, his spiritual advice, were considered as an ample return for his food, his lodging, and his stipend. But this was not the general feeling of the country gentleman. The coarse and ignorant squire, who thought that it belonged to his dignity to have grace said every day at his table, by an ecclesiastic in full canonicals, found means to reconcile dignity with economy. A young Levite—such was the phrase then in use—might be had for his board, a small garret, and ten pounds a year, and might not only perform his own professional functions, might not only be the most patient of butts and listeners, might not only be always ready in fine weather for bowls, and in rainy weather for shovelboard, but might also save the expense of a gardener, or of a groom. Sometimes the reverend man nailed up the apricots, and sometimes he curried the coach horses. He cast up the farrier's bills. He walked ten miles with a message or a parcel. If he was permitted to dine with the family, he was expected to content himself with the plainest fare. He might fill himself with the corned beef and the carrots; but as soon as the tarts and cheesecakes made their appearance, he quitted his seat, and stood aloof till he was summoned to return thanks for the repast, from a great part of which he had been excluded.*

Perhaps, after some years of service, he was presented to a living sufficient to support him: but he often found it necessary to purchase his preferment by a species of simony, which furnished an inexhaustible subject of pleasantry to three or four generations of scoffers. With his cure he was expected to take a wife. The wife had ordinarily been in the patron's service; and it was well if she was not suspected of standing too high in the patron's favor. Indeed, the nature of the matrimonial connexions which the clergymen of that age were in the habit of forming, is the most certain indication of the place which the order held in the social system. An Oxonian, writing a few months after the death of Charles the Second, complained bitterly, not only that the country attorney and the country apothecary looked down with disdain on the country clergyman, but that one of the lessons most earnestly inculcated on every girl of honorable family was to give no encouragement to a lover in orders, and that, if any young lady forgot this precept, she was almost as much disgraced as by an illicit amour. Clarendon, who assuredly bore no ill-will to the Church, mentions it as a sign of the confusion of ranks which the great rebellion had produced, that some damsels of noble families had bestowed themselves on divines. A waiting woman was generally considered as the most suitable helpmate for a parson. Queen Elizabeth, as the head of the Church, had given what seemed to be a formal sanction to this prejudice, by issuing special orders that no clergyman should presume to marry a servant girl, without the consent of her master or mistress. During several generations, accordingly, the relation between priests and handmaidens was a theme for endless jest; nor would it be easy to find in the comedy of the seventeenth century, a single instance of a clergyman who wins a spouse above the rank of a cook.† Even so late as the time of George the Second, the keenest of all observers of life and manners, himself a priest, remarked that, in a great household, the chaplain was the resource of a lady's maid whose character had been blown upon, and who was therefore forced to give up hopes of catching the steward.‡

In general, the divine who quitted his chaplainship for a benefice and a wife, found that he had only exchanged one class of vexations for another. Not one living in fifty enabled the incumbent to bring up a family comfortably. As children multiplied and grew, the household of the priest became more and more beggarly. Holes appeared more and more plainly in the thatch of his parsonage, and in his single cassock. Often it was only by toiling on his glebe, by feeding swine, and by loading dung-carts, that he could obtain daily bread; nor did his utmost exertions always prevent the bailiffs from taking his concordance and his inkstand in execution. It was a white day on which he was admitted into the kitchen of a great house, and regaled by the servants with cold meat and ale. His children were brought up like the children of the neighboring peasantry. His boys followed the plough; and his girls went out to service. Study he found impossible: for the advowson of his living would hardly have sold for a sum sufficient to purchase a good theological library; and he might be considered as unusually lucky if he had ten or twelve dogseared volumes among the pots and pans on his shelves. Even a keen and strong intellect might be expected to rust in so unfavorable a situation.

The Squire at Home.

His chief serious employment was the care of his property. He examined samples of grain, handled pigs, and on market days made bargains over a tankard with drovers and hop merchants. His chief pleasures were commonly derived from field sports and from an unrefined sensuality.—His language and pronunciation were such as we should now expect to hear only from the most ignorant clowns. His oaths, coarse jests, and scurrilous terms of abuse, were uttered with the broadest accent of his province. It was easy to discern, from the first words which he spoke, whether he came from Somersetshire or Yorkshire. He troubled himself little about decorating his abode, and, if he attempted decoration, seldom produced anything but deformity.—The litter of a farm-yard gathered under the windows of his bedchamber, and the cabbages and gooseberry bushes grew close to his hall door. His table was loaded with coarse plenty; and guests were cordially welcomed to it. But, as the habit of drinking to excess was general in the class to which he belonged, and as his fortune did not enable him to intoxicate large assemblies daily with claret or canary, strong beer was the ordinary beverage. The quantity of beer consumed in those days was indeed enormous. For beer then, was to the middle and lower classes, not only all that beer now is, but all that wine, tea, and ardent spirits now are. It was only at great houses, or on great occasions, that foreign drink was placed on the board. The ladies of the house, whose business it had commonly been to cook the repast, retired as soon as the dishes had been devoured, and left the gentleman to their ale and tobacco. The coarse jollity of the afternoon was often prolonged till the revellers were laid under the table.

It was very seldom that the country gentleman caught glimpses of the great world; and what he saw of it tended rather to confuse than to enlighten his understanding. His opinions respecting religion, government, foreign countries, and former times, having been derived, not from study, from observation, or from conversation with enlightened companions, but from such traditions as were current in his own small circle, were the opinions of a child. He adhered to them, however, with the obstinacy which is generally found in ignorant men accustomed to be fed with flattery. His animosities were numerous and bitter. He hated Frenchmen and Italians, Scotchmen and Irishmen, Papists and Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists, Quakers and Jews. Towards London and Londoners he felt an aversion which more than once produced important political effects. His wife and daughter were, in tastes and acquirements, below a housekeeper or a stillroom maid of the present day. They stitched and spun, brewed gooseberry wine, cured marigolds, and made the crust for the venison pasty.

The Squire in the City.

When the lord of Lincolnshire or Shropshire manor appeared in Fleet street, he was as easily distinguished from the resident population as a Turk or a Lascar. His dress, his gait, his accent, the manner in which he stared at the shops, stumbled into the gutters, ran against the porters, and stood under the water-spouts, marked him out as an excellent subject for the operations of swindlers and banterers. Bullies jostled him into the kennel. Hackney coachmen splashed him from head to foot. Thieves explored with perfect security the huge pockets of his horseman's coat, while he stood entranced by the splendor of the Lord Mayor's show. Money droppers, sore from the cart's tail, introduced themselves to him, and appeared to him the most honest friendly gentlemen that he had ever seen. Painted women, the refuse of Lewkner Lane and Whetstone Park, passed themselves on him for countesses and maids of honor. If he asked his way to St. James', his informant sent him to Mile End. If he went into a shop, he was instantly discerned to be a fit purchaser of everything that nobody else would buy, of second-hand embroidery, copper rings, and watches that would not go. If he rambled into any fashionable coffee house, he became a mark for the insolent derision of fops, and the grave waggery of templars. Enraged and mortified, he soon returned to his mansion, and there, in the homage of his tenants, and the conversation of his boon companions, found consolation for the vexations and humiliations which he had undergone. There he once more felt himself a great man; and he saw nothing above him except when at the assizes he took his seat on the bench near the judge, or when at the muster of the militia he saluted the lord lieutenant."

The Coffee House.

Foreigners remarked that the coffee house was that which especially distinguished London from all other cities; that the coffee house was the Londoner's home, and that those who wished to find a gentleman, commonly asked, not whether he lived in Fleet Street or Chancery Lane, but whether he frequented the Grecian or the Rainbow. Nobody was excluded from these places who laid down his penny at the bar. Yet every rank and profession, and every shade of religious and political opinion, had its own head quarters. There were houses near St. James' Park where fops congregated, their heads and shoulders covered with black or flaxen wigs, not less ample than those which are now worn by the chancellor and by the Speaker of the House of Commons. The wig came from Paris; and so did the rest of the fine gentleman's ornaments, his embroidered coat, his fringed gloves, and the tassel which upheld his pantaloons. The conversation was in that dialect which, long after it had ceased to be spoken in fashionable circles, continued, in the mouth of Lord Foppington, to excite the mirth of theatres.* The atmosphere was like that of a perfumer's shop. Tobacco, in any other form than that of richly scented snuff was held in abomination. If any clown, ignorant of the usages of the house, called for a pipe, the sneers of the whole assembly, and the short answers of the waiters soon convinced him that he had better go somewhere else. Nor, indeed, would he have had far to go. For, in general, the coffee rooms reeked with tobacco like a guard room; and strangers sometimes expressed their surprise that so many people should leave their own firesides to sit in the midst of eternal fog and stench. Nowhere was the smoking more constant than at Will's. That celebrated house, situated between Covent Garden and Bow Street, was sacred to polite letters. There, the talk was about poetical justice and the unities of place and time. There was a faction for Perrault and the moderns, a faction for Boileau and the ancients. One group debated whether Paradise Lost ought not to have been in rhyme. To another, an envious poetaster demonstrated that Venice Preserved ought to have been hooted from the stage. Under no roof was a greater variety of figures to be seen, earls in stars and garters, clergyman in cassocks and bands, pert templars, sheepish lads from the universities, translators and index makers in ragged coats of frieze. The great press was to get near the chair where John Dryden sate. In winter that chair was always in the warmest nook by the fire; in summer it stood in the balcony. To bow to him, and to hear his opinion of Racine's last tragedy, of Bossu's treatise on epic poetry was thought a privilege. A pinch from his snuff box was an honor sufficient to turn the head of a young enthusiast. There were coffee houses where the first medical men might be consulted. Doctor John Radcliffe, who, in the year 1685, rose to the largest practice in London, came daily, when the Exchange was full, from his house in Bow Street, then a fashionable part of the capital, to Garraway's, and was to be found surrounded by surgeons and apothecaries, at a particular table. There were puritan coffee houses, where no oath was heard, and where lank-haired men discussed election and reprobation through their noses; Jew coffee houses, where dark eyed money changers from Venice and from Amsterdam greeted each other; and Popish coffee houses, where, as good Protestants believed, Jesuits planned, over their cups, another great fire, and cast silver bullets to shoot the king.

Master Humphrey and Little Nell.

Mr. Dickens, in his new preface to "The Old Curiosity Shop," speaks with regret for the sacrificed Master Humphrey and other machinery of his book adventure, and pays a delicate tribute to Thomas Hood, who led the way with the public to the appreciation of "Little Nell."

"I caused the few sheets of 'Master Humphrey's Clock,' which had been printed in connexion with it, to be cancelled; and, like the unfinished tale of the windy night and the notary, in 'The Sentimental Journey,' they became the property of the trunkmaker and the butter-man. I was especially unwilling, I confess, to enrich those respectable trades with the opening paper of the abandoned design, in which 'Master Humphrey' described himself and his manner of life. Though I now affect to make the confession philosophically, as referring to a by-gone emotion, I am conscious that my pen winces a little even while I write these words. But it was done, and wisely done, and 'Master Humphrey's Clock,' as originally constructed, became one of the lost books of the earth—which, we all know, are far more precious than any that can be read for love or money.

In reference to the tale itself, I desire to say very little here. The many friends it has won me, and the many hearts it has turned to me when they have been full of private sorrow, invest it with an interest, in my mind, which is not a public one, and the rightful place of which appears to be 'a more removed ground.'

I will merely observe, therefore, that, in writing the book, I had always in my fancy to surround the lonely figure of the child with grotesque and wild, though not impossible companions, and to gather about her innocent face and pure intentions, associates as strange and incongenial as the grim objects that are about her bed when her history is first foreshadowed.

I have a mournful pride in one recollection associated with 'Little Nell.' While she was yet upon her wanderings, not then concluded, there appeared in a literary journal, an essay of which she was the principal theme, so earnestly, so eloquently, and tenderly appreciative of her, and of all her shadowy kith and kin, that it would have been insensibility in me, if I could have read it without an unusual glow of pleasure and encouragement. Long afterwards, and when I had come to know him well, and to see him, stout of heart, going slowly down into his grave, I knew the writer of that essay to be THOMAS HOOD."—*Literary World.*

True Life.

The mere lapse of years is not life. To eat and drink and sleep—to be exposed to darkness and the light—to pace around the mill of habit, and turn the wheel of health; to make reason our book-keeper and turn thought into implements of trade—this is not life. In all this, but a poor fraction of the consciousness of humanity is awakened, and the sanctities still slumber, which make it most worth while to be. Knowledge, truth, love, beauty, goodness, faith, alone give vitality to the mechanism of existence: the laugh of mirth which vibrates through the heart—the tears which freshen the dry wastes within—the music which brings childhood back—the prayer that calls the future near—the doubt which makes us meditate—the death which startles us with mystery—the hardships that force us to struggle—the anxiety that ends in trust—these are the true nourishment of our natural being.

Impulse.

Men, who are called impulsive, are much slandered. Are not the most noble, generous actions, which adorn the annals of the world, referrible to this agent? Reason is even exalted above impulse; but how fallible is reason? Is it not often opposed to faith, and does it not lead to the most dangerous errors? So far as the boundaries of our experience extend, warm impulse has prompted more good deeds than cold reason. We would sooner trust that man, in whose breast glows the fire of enthusiasm, than him who, cool and collected at all times, seldom acts without suspicion, and often deliberates till the hour of advantage has passed.—Faults, committed without reflection, are certainly more venial than premeditated sin. He who errs hastily repents sincerely; but the wrong done upon calculation is never willingly repaired. Would that society were more lenient to impulse! Even when productive of harm, it is unselfish, and the consequences to which it leads are hurtful to no one so much as to its possessor. Pity is no stranger to the impulsive man, and not seldom do the tears of sympathy fall from his eyes. To friendship he is faithful, and for love he would sacrifice both interest and worldly esteem. Let us be compassionate therefore, to the errors of impulse, while we respect the calm dictates of caution and prudence.

From Chambers' Edinburgh Journal.

Great Men.

It is universally remarked that now-a-days there are no great men—no great statesmen, authors, artists, dramatic writers, orators, theologians, or philosophers. Everywhere we see but a lifeless mediocrity—cleverness, and sometimes brilliancy of acquirements—but no great depth, scarcely any towering genius, little courage or ability to soar to commanding heights. Where is there now any great scholar; where a Shakspeare, Milton, Scott; where a John Kemble: where a Newton; where anybody in the superlative! The days even of Bonapartes are gone!—Ample scope is there for usurpation; but we look in vain for a Usurper! The hour is come; but where is the man?

This is exactly one of those subjects which admits of being treated *pro* and *con*. Much may be said on both sides, without any decided preponderance one way or another. In the first place it will not escape observation, that the alleged scarcity of great men is very much caused by a general advance throughout society. For one great writer in a period of literary darkness, we have now a hundred writers of ordinary, though no mean capacity, all actively exercising their pens. For one artist of inapproachable excellence, we have thousands, who can at least please us with their productions. We have, to be sure, no Newton; but look at the multiplicity of minds turned to philosophic pursuits, each poring on the face of Nature, and occasionally disclosing new and interesting features. If no man towers over his fellows, it may be because all have to climb higher than the great men of former times did, in order to be conspicuous. Where discovery has been pushed to its limits, we cannot reasonably expect to have any more discoverers. There are mariners of as ardent temperament as Columbus, and as willing to encounter dangers, but in what direction can these longing geniuses go in quest of a new continent?—In maritime discovery, as in many other fields, the work is pretty nearly done.—America, the solar system, the principle of gravitation, the laws of chemical affinity, the balloon, the steam engine, and a thousand other things, can be discovered only *once*. If physical science has not got to the end of its tether, all within the circuit of the tether has been gleaned so marvellously bare, that in these latter days we are left comparatively little to pick up. Lucky fellows, those Newtons, Keplers, Columbuses, and Watts.

True in one sense; but let us not be led away by a prevalent tendency to exaggerate the glories of past times, and despise the present. After making certain allowances as to the absence of such commanding intellects as that of Shakspeare—a man not for a day, "but for all time"—it may be fairly questioned if there ever was any period of the world's history which so abounded in men eminent for their talents, respectable for their aims and acquirements. For anything we can tell, the discoveries to be made by these men and their successors may be as grand as those of Newton, as useful as those of Watt. Great as has been our advance, we are to all appearance, only on the threshold of knowledge. All things seem to prognosticate that in a century hence, we shall be looked back to as pigmies in the arts—"gatherers of pebbles on the shore." The discoveries, the inventions, the researches of the passing hour are all calculated to convince us that there yet remains a field of inquiry, which appears the more boundless as we advance.—But, setting aside any such hypothesis, and taking matters only as they are, we would be inclined to speak of the present age as relatively anything but contemptible, either in arts or learning. That the individuals who excel do not rise into a distinguished pre-eminence, is accounted for by the fact, a fact become proverbial—"that the world does not know its great men," at least not till it has lost them. As no man is great to his valet-de-chambre, so no man is thought much of who may be seen any day walking in the public thoroughfares. It is only when he is dead and buried, and no longer takes a part in common-place concerns, that his merits are understood and appreciated. Washington, in the midst of his mighty struggles, was aggrieved by a thousand detractions. Priestly, whom we are now in the habit of looking back to as a great man, was very far from being considered great while he lived. Chased from his home by a fanatical mob, and coldly sympathised with by men of learning, he died an exile from the country which was unworthy of him. It would be telling a twenty-times told tale to go over the histories of "great authors" from Homer downwards, who were treated not in the handsomest manner while they were living and pouring forth their deathless effusions. Unfortunately for men who in some way distinguish themselves in literature, arts, philosophy, or statesmanship, they are usually judged of while in life, not exclusively in reference to their services or labors, but to a large extent in subordination to professional and other jealousies, or in connection with sectarian and party views. In Great Britain, a native has much less chance of gaining celebrity for his discoveries in science, or his excellence in art, than a foreigner. Had Liebig been a professor in a London instead of a German University, he would scarcely have been listened to with the patience and respect he has been. We should not only have been too familiar with his name and person, but have been jealous of his reputation. It is a totally different thing when we have to investigate the pretensions of a man who lives a thousand miles off. He is, then, as respects our own affairs, as good as dead, and is not likely to trouble us.—One can make nothing by condemning him, while it is quite safe to praise him: we can in his case afford to be magnanimously impartial. No man receives such numerous and cordial testimonials of his high claims to consideration, as he who is going to quit the scene of his labors. Enemies hasten to swear to him an everlasting friendship. Rivals weep bitter tears that they are to lose so great a luminary from their system. The wailings on such occasions are ever put to good interest. We all know how to be generous when the generosity places any object of desire the more surely within our reach.

But more than this: all have small prejudices to cherish, and it is not usual to speak with respect of a person who in any way deranges the complacency of foregone conclusions. The outer world, in a state of a happy innocence, imagines that the learned, so-called, are worshippers at the shrine of Truth. Alas! how few are there who are not followers of idols. Each has his cherished fancy, which he feels bound to combat for in all circumstances; and wo to the man who audaciously brings distrust on his opinions! While motives so ungracious, independently of considerations of a sterner and less creditable nature, are permitted to influence the judgment, can we be surprised that so few living men attain the distinction which we ordinarily call "great?"

If in the present age there be any particular impediment to the rise of great men, it may be said to consist in a widely diffused taste for, and habit of criticism, the occasional unjudging severity of which has unfortunately the effect of repressing talent unsupported by ambition. If there be no great statesmen, have the public generally labored to raise men into power in whom they can place unqualified confidence?—Perhaps the critics are more faulty than the criticised. In the United States, as we are informed, the more enlightened portion of the community, from a regard for their own feelings, take no part in politics, and studiously keep out of place. And in our own country, it is pretty obvious that on similar grounds, the "best men" systematically refuse to come forward as candidates for office. An upright man, with no selfish purpose in view, does not choose to expose himself to obloquy, or to have his services paid in public ingratitude. Thus a people may lose something by being too quick-sighted in detecting errors. A charitable consideration of human infirmities has more than Christian duty to recommend it: it is the soundest policy.

So much for the general influences which tend to repress the growth of "great men." Let it, however, again be remembered, that in very many instances the check on greatness is independent of external circumstances. No individual can expect to travel on the path to fame without getting rubs by the way. The more prominent a man becomes, the more is he exposed to challenge; and it would be well for him not to mistake the cavilings of the envious, or the morbid grumblings of the habitually discontented, for the expression of a healthful and general opinion. The satisfied say nothing: it is only the brawler and busy-body who make themselves heard. Besides—and here, perhaps, is the pith of the whole matter—do the great in skill and intellect always conduct themselves in a way to disarm jealousy, and secure approbation? How frequently men of talent, yielding themselves up to the petty impulses of a restless temperament, are observed to destroy the reputation which admirers are willing to accord, and to which even enemies could not properly, for any length of time, present a feasible opposition. In such cases, the would-be-great man is less judged of by his talents than his failings. Great in science, literature or art, he is, perhaps, infirm in temper, sensual in indulgence, weak in resolution, imperfect in his moral sense. The world may be captious, neglectful; much grievous wrong may sometimes be a consequence of unworthy jealousies; but on the whole, a man's chief enemy is himself. When Horace Vernet suffered the indignity of having his pictures refused admittance to an exhibition in the Louvre, did he fly into a passion, and go and kill himself as an ill-used man? No. Without uttering a word of complaint, he exhibited his productions elsewhere, and lived to be at the head of the French school of painting—a lesson worth taking by others besides artists. We repeat an advice formerly offered—NEVER COMPLAIN; the world flies from ill-used men. Go on, true soul! faint not in doing the work before thee; but do it *quietly*, and leave the rest to Him who overshadows us with the wings of His Providence! Remember that the small oppressions of coteries are but transient, and act with slight effect on the truly great—great in sentiment as well as intellect. We are each of us on trial, and if conscious of rectitude, need not fear the verdict of the tribunal.

W. C.

Beautifully Expressed.

No man, however degraded, is utterly beyond reformation. Beautifully has Whittier, in one of his poems, expressed this truth:

"As on the White Sea's charmed shore,
The Parsee sees his holy hill
With dunneth smoke-clouds curtain'd o'er,
Yet knows beneath them evermore,
The low pale fire is quivering still;
So underneath its clouds of sin,
The heart of man retaineth yet,
Gleams of its holy origin;
And half quenched stars that never set,
Dim color of its faded bow,
And early beauty linger there,
And o'er its wasted desert blow
Faint breathings of its morning air.
Oh! never yet upon the scroll
Of the sin-stained but priceless soul,
Hath heaven inscribed 'Despair!'
Cast not the clouded gem away,
Quench not the living but dim ray—
My brother man, beware!
With that deep voice which from the skies
Forbade the Patriarch's sacrifice,
God's angel cries, Forbear!'"

Learned Parrots.

A very remarkable instance is related of a parrot belonging to Mr. Braham of Brompton, which was presented to him by a lady who had bestowed great pains in teaching it to talk. This gentleman had a friend to dine with him one day, and after dinner a pause having ensued in the conversation, the guest was startled by a voice proceeding from one corner of the room, calling out in a strong, hearty manner, *Come, Braham, give us a song*. Nothing could exceed the surprise and admiration of the company. The request being repeated, and not granted, the parrot struck up the first verse of "God save the king," in a clear, warbling tone, aiming at the style of the singer, and sung it through. The ease with which this bird was taught, was equally surprising as the performance.—The same lady taught it to accost Madame Catalini, when dining with Mr. Braham, that it so alarmed her that she nearly fell from her chair. On its commencing "Rule Britannia," in a loud and intrepid tone, the enchantress fell on her knees before the bird, expressing in terms of delight her admiration of its talents.

This parrot has only been equalled in talents by one owned by Colonel O'Kelly, of London. Once upon being asked to sing, it replied, *I never sing on a Sunday*. 'Never mind that, Poll,' the Colonel would say, 'come give us a song.' *No, excuse me, I have got a cold*, it would reply.—*Don't you hear how hoarse I am?* This extraordinary bird could perform the verses entire of "God save the king," words and music, from beginning to end.

When the Colonel and his parrot were at Brighton one time, the bird was asked to sing; it answered, *I can't*. Another time it left off in the middle of a tune, and said, *I have forgot*. Colonel O'Kelly continued the tune for a few notes, and the parrot took it up where the Colonel had left off.—The parrot took up the bottom of a lady's frock, and said, *What a pretty foot!* The parrot seeing the family at breakfast, said, *Won't you have some breakfast, Poll?*—The company mopped it a good deal, and it said, *I don't like it*. It would ask for all that it wanted, and apparently with reason. It was purchased at Bristol for 100 guineas. Some persons who were desirous of exhibiting it publicly offered the Colonel 100 guineas a year for the use of it, but he was too much attached to accept the offer. Its death was announced in the London Gazette of the 9th of October, 1802. It was dissected by Messrs. Kennedy and Brooks, who found the muscles of the larnyx, which regulate the voice, considerably enlarged by exercise.

Points Worthy to Receive Consideration.

FROM THE FRENCH OF PETIT SENN, OF GENEVA.

Every administration in the world—whether it be the executive of the State, or a corporation board, or a committee, or an individual "dressed in a little brief authority," has a greater or less store of dilatory phrases to which recourse is had for the purpose of answering urgent applications, putting off the impatient, satisfying the clamorous, and giving to all petitioners the impression of unceasing labor in their cause. At the head of these phrases for answering everything and everybody, the sentence surely deserves to be placed, "Your business is under consideration." Admirable phrase! admirable for the very vagueness of its definiteness and the very definiteness of its vagueness. Laconic, too! as brief as could possibly be desired. It is eminently an administrative phrase. Unparalleled in its applicability, it adapts itself to everything—furnishes a full reply in itself, or an admirable backing to an objection or excuse—accounts for the most protracted delay in any kind of business under the sun—is an answer to every question, and the only answer to some questions. All committee-rooms echo with it—all council chambers resound with it. It is a sentence, in short, which should be engraved upon the threshhold of all government offices and the seats of all government officials, in order that, should the latter be absent, and the former closed, the anxious applicant need not call again for the answer he will most assuredly receive.

But the more closely we examine the full bearing and import of this combination of words, the more admirable it must appear to us. An individual inquires, "How is my business going on?" and I, an official somewhere or other, reply, "It is under consideration." "Under consideration?" Observe the satisfactory ambiguousness of the words. Had I said, "under my consideration," or "under any one's consideration," I should have reduced it at once to the value of the unit; but now, not only am I included, but everybody else who works with me: the entire body of which I am a member, are clearly designated. There is nothing whatever to prevent your imagining the heads of government engaged in the matter; the applicant, if a novice, of course concludes it at once to be so, and pictures to himself the whole administration engrossed by his memorial, employed upon the means of redressing his grievance, or granting his petition. What can satisfy him if he be not content with every wheel of government turning for him, and for him alone?

"Under consideration." You are not left a word to say: objection you can make none. Had you been told, "It has been considered," you might naturally have asked, "What was the decision?" Or had it been said, "It will be considered," you might request, with all due humility, to be informed at what period it was thought possible it might come to your turn to engage the attention of the body to whom your business has been submitted. But it is quite another matter now. The words are, "It is under consideration;" that is to say, at this very moment every effort is being made to do you full justice, every energy is put forth, every nerve strung in your behalf; the attention of every one is riveted upon you, and you alone. What more would you have? You stand, with open mouth, completely arrested, fixed to the spot by this answer, unable to articulate more at the very utmost than an "Ah!"—a little prolonged, it may be—and you can but bow politely and retire, as fully satisfied as your temperament or knowledge of the intrinsic value of words permits you to be.

"Under consideration." You may have these words repeated to you for twenty years successively; but with what show of reason can you complain of the cool, cautious, deliberate inquiry into every circumstance of your case, or of the length of time employed in the investigation of your business?—What is it you want? That it should "be considered." Well, and have you not been told that this is precisely what is doing?—You have absolutely nothing left to say. If not completed sooner, it is because it is impossible to proceed more rapidly in doing the thing well. Surely you would not have it slurred over. And you cannot, in conscience, require that your case should be considered oftener than *always*.

Most valuable phrase! What tiresome circumlocutions, what troublesome explanations, what framing of excuses, are spared by it to authorities in general! Officials may slumber as sweetly on these few words, as in an easy-chair. The phrase is the very ottoman of power, the downy pillow of beaureaucracy, whence it may meet every proposal of amelioration, every expectation of improvement, every desire for a new order of things by a few words—the true talisman of *statu quo*—"It is under consideration."

And now that it has been itself "under consideration," who will not thank me for having made this feeble effort to hold up a phrase playing so important a part in parliamentary proceedings to the enthusiastic admiration and gratitude of those who make use of it? I write not for the ingrates who are unreasonable enough to feel indignation at its being addressed to themselves.

A Marriage Vagary.

The following extract is from the "Marriage Looking-Glass," a new book in the press of JAS. MUNROE & Co., Boston:—

"Mr. Thomas Day, the well known author of 'Sanford and Merton,' and a gentleman of unbounded benevolence and the strictest honor, indulged in the wildest ideas respecting marriage. At the time of his father's death, from whom he received considerable property, he was only thirteen months old. When he arrived at years of discretion, he came to the determination of forming his character after the antique model of the most virtuous among the Greeks and Romans, scorning to adopt the prevailing fashion of wearing powder, &c. Yet, surprising as it may be, the principles he adopted in early youth, became the rule from which he never swerved in after life.

"Having paid his addresses, when very young, to a somewhat flighty lady, who rejected him, he received a strong antipathy to the then mode of female education, and formed the romantic resolve of training a young damsel to his own taste. According to the narrative, she was to be simple as a mountain girl, fearless and intrepid as the Spartan wives and Roman heroines.

"So soon as he became of age, he visited the hospital for foundling girls at Shrewsbury, and having given ample testimonials of his moral conduct, and the most satisfactory security for their future provision, he was permitted to select two little girls, with the intention of educating them after his own fashion, and marrying the one who should prove the most successful in gaining his esteem and affection. They were both beautiful; the one he called Lucretia—the brunette, Sabrina. The more quietly to pursue his own plans, he removed to France, where, during their sickness, and in consequence of his not having taken an English servant with him, he was frequently compelled to perform the part of a nurse or a domestic to his young charge. His courage shortly began to cool, so that he returned to England, and was glad enough to rid himself of Lucretia, by placing her under the care of a milliner.

"Sabrina was now to be taught the virtues of Arria, Portia, Cornelia; to be imbued with stoic indifference to pain and fear.

"But, alas! the bud of promise broke under the trial. When melted wax was dropped upon her naked arms, she flinched and wept; when she was fired at with pistols, she started and screamed.

"Yet, the worst remains to be told. She conceived a strong dislike to study, and was utterly incapable of keeping a secret. All the private matters entrusted to her confidence, by way of trial, were revealed as inviolable secrets by her to her playmates, and, as might be supposed, rapidly found their way back again to the ear of the amiable, but fanatical patron. He was now, therefore, as happy to part with Sabrina, as he had previously been to dispossess himself of Lucretia. After other severe disappointments, he met with a lady of rank, fortune, age, and education, similar to his own. She pardoned his eccentricities for the sake of his sterling virtues; and so great was their conjugal happiness, that after his premature death, the result of a kick from a colt, which he was training in a style similar to the discipline he practised upon Sabrina, his lady refused again to behold the light. At midnight, when the gloom was congenial to her sorrows, she rambled about her neglected grounds, and at the expiration of two years, died of a broken heart!"

Are Old Birds to be Caught with Chaff?

Many specious maxims have obtained general credence in the world which are in reality false. Among these is the saying that 'old birds are not to be caught with chaff.' Whereas the fact often is that 'the older the bird, the more he flatters himself that he is worth catching.' He is easily caught were it worth while; but you have caught nothing, perhaps, when you have got him. Chaff is too valuable, too precious, to be expended wastefully; and because you are not so silly as to throw powder away, he conceives himself to be shot-proof. As nobody tries to catch him, he fondly persuades himself that his own exceeding cunning secures him from capture. 'Take me if you can,' chirps he, and goes dodging about the woods, as though a flock of golden vultures were pursuing him. He is quite safe. He has not the felicity of being in peril. The young condor, pressed even by vulgar appetite, will not do him the honor of dining upon him. His toughness and antiquity are sure safeguards.—He is only not captured, because there is nothing captivating about him. But if, by any chance, he hath a tail-feather fit for plucking, or a bone worthy the distinction of being picked, then is your old bird in imminent danger, for you may catch him when you like with half a pinch of chaff. The tender foxling, not arrived at the maturity of slyness, who never tasted chicken of his own stealing, shall take him without a ruffle of his plumage—only by pronouncing its dingy brown to be rich crimson.

What flocks of old birds flutter about in society, all sure that they never shall be caged, and all safe until a lure is laid for them! But the longer they live, the less chance have they of avoiding the trap. The older they grow, the slenderer the means of escape. The starched matron is fain to put faith in the compliment which, in her day of youth and grace, she knew to be nonsense. She is now only half-handsome, and can no longer afford to think her eyes less brilliant than she is told they are. She must make up by exaggerating what is left, for the loss of what is gone. She is not now in a condition to call a fine remark rank flattery; she is obliged to believe in self-defence. If her mirror will not admit of this, she has other resources; she has sage counsel, admirable judgment, perfect knowledge of the world. Admire these, and with a dignity which you call Siddonian, she confesses that she is yours. You have only to convert the compliment to her beauty at twenty, into a tribute to her sagacity at fifty-five. Tell her she is not to be imposed upon, and you impose upon her effectually. Admire her penetration, and you will not find her impenetrable.—*Dr. Wayland.*

Taste for Reading.

"If I were to pray for a taste," says Sir John Herschell; "which would stand me in stead under every variety of circumstance, and be a source of happiness and cheerfulness to me through life, and a shield against its ills, however things may go amiss, and the world frown upon me, it would be a *taste for reading*. I speak of it, of course, only as a worldly advantage, and not in the slightest degree as superseding or derogating from the higher offices, and surer and stronger panoply of religious principles; but, as a taste, an instrument, and a mode of pleasurable gratification. Give a man this taste, and the means of gratifying it, and you can hardly fail of making a happy man, unless, indeed, you put into his hands a perverse selection of books. You place him in contact with the best society in every period of history; with the wisest and wittiest, with the tenderest, the bravest, and the purest characters who have adorned humanity; you make him a denizen of all nations, a contemporary of all ages. The world has been created for him. It is hardly possible but the character should take a higher and better tone from the constant habit of associating in thought with a class of thinkers, to say the least of it, above the average of humanity. It is morally impossible, but that the manners should take a tinge of good breeding and civilisation from having constantly before our eyes the way in which the best informed men have talked and conducted themselves in their intercourse with each other. There is a gentle, but perfectly irresistible coercion in a habit of reading, well-directed, over the whole tenor of a man's character and conduct, which is not the less effectual because it works insensibly, and because it is the last thing he dreams of. It cannot, in short, be better summed up, than in the words of the Latin Poet;—*Emollit mores nec sinit esse feros*. It civilises the conduct of men, and suffers them not to remain barbarous."

We seek advice from others, oftentimes, not because we do not know what we ought to do, but because we do know, and we seek in our advisers a help for a weak will.—*Richter.*

"Advice," says Coleridge, "is like snow; the softer it falls the longer it dwells upon and the deeper it sinks into the mind."

Modesty is the only sure bait if you angle for praise,

It is difficult to descend with grace without seeming to fall.—*Blair.*

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*Eachard, Causes of the Contempt of the Clergy; Oldham, Satire to a Friend about to leave the University; Tatler, 256, 258. That the English clergy were a low-born class, is remarked in the Travels of the Grand Duke Cosmo.

†Roger and Abagail in Fletcher's Scornful Lady, Bull and the Nurse in Vanbrugh's Relapse, Smirk and Susan in Shadwell's Lancashire Witcher, are instances.

‡Swift's Directions to Servants.

*The chief peculiarity of this dialect was that, in a large class of words, the O was pronounced like A. Thus stork was pronounced stark.—See Vanbrugh's Relapse. Lord Sunderland was a great master of this court tune, as Roger North calls it, and Titus Oates affected it in the hope of passing for a fine gentleman. Examen, 77: 254.